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AL-06-001-0771

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AND THE INTERNET
ENERGY AND AIR QUALITY
ENVIRONMENT AND
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SUBCOMMITTEES
TECHNICAL AND TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE
CHAIR
OVERSIGHT
INTELLIGENCE POLICY

June 21, 2006

Mr. Stephen L. Johnson
Administrator
US Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

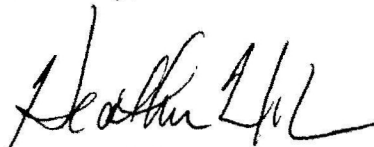
Dear Stephen,

I am pleased to introduce you to a company in Albuquerque, New Mexico—SALtech Corporation—which may be of service to the Environmental Protection Agency's search for industrial partners to develop surveillance and monitoring systems to provide early detection of water contamination.

Enclosed is information provided by A. Michael Baca, President and Director of SALtech outlining their technology. Mr. Baca is seeking an opportunity to work with EPA to demonstrate the technology and methods they have developed. SALtech has received two patents for its water purification and water security technologies.

Thank you in advance for reviewing the attached information from SALtech within the needs of the EPA and rules that govern your processes. I have encouraged Mr. Baca to make contact with the EPA Regional office to pursue opportunities to be of service the Agency. If you have any questions of my office, please contact Julie Dreike at 346-6781.

Sincerely,



Heather Wilson
Member of Congress

HW: jd2

Cc: Administrator Richard Greene
EPA Region 6
1445 Ross Ave, Suite 1200
Dallas, TX 75202

A. Michael Baca, SALtech



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Albuquerque, NM 87106
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SOLUTIONS FOR OBTAINING SAFER DRINKING WATER

UV Laser Water Sterilization and Chemical/Biological Sensing and Notification for Waterborne Biological Threats

Introduction:

Water experts agree that, mankind has nearly destroyed this life giving resource. It is polluted and unsafe. Most municipalities have to go to great expense to ensure safe drinking water. The microbiological quality of water as delivered for use can be significantly improved in many cases. Water can host several fast-growing microorganisms or bacterial strains that can be harmful to humans. Elimination of biological contaminant (e.g., microorganisms, protozoan, spores, moulds and viruses etc.) from water is difficult and cannot be fully achieved unless it can be eliminated at the point of water delivery – "near its point of use."

SALtech Corporation, a New Mexico based company, was created in 1996. Since 2001 SALtech has been involved in developing new and technologically advanced solutions for obtaining safer drinking water, air quality, chemical/biological sensing and notification. SALtech has already received two patents for its water purification and water security technologies. U.S Patent 6,740,244 entitled "Near point of use laser water treatment systems and methods" was issued May 25, 2004 and U.S. Patent 6,919,019 entitled "Laser water detection treatment & notification systems and methods" was issued July 19, 2005. We believe that the current state of water security technology does not fully recognize the benefits of "real-time water security detection and response technology", which SALtech currently holds exclusive rights too. Our laser water treatment methods and biological/chemical contamination sensing and notification technology is intended for use with drinking water distribution systems. SALtech has taken current advances in laser and communications technology into consideration in developing its patented technology, such as advances in short wavelength semiconductor lasers and wired/wireless data communications.

Current Threats:

Future threats to our public drinking supplies will be of two major forms. The first major threat is already generally known as passive contamination that is mostly brought on by negligently caused industrial and consumer pollution. The second major threat to water supplied will be brought on intentionally. Recent government intelligence suggests terrorists have discussed recruiting employees of water treatment facilities to poison drinking supplies in hopes of causing mass casualties, according to a federal bulletin obtained by the Review-Journal. Marked "not to be released to the public," the four-page bulletin issued by the FBI and Department of Homeland Security relates, in chilling detail, unnamed terrorists' plotting discussions monitored by the government. Terrorists spoke about inserting an unnamed poison into water during the chlorination process. "To accomplish this objective, they discussed recruiting insiders to work with them," it reads. In response, the bulletin explores vulnerabilities that could be exploited by workers with access to treatment processes and chemicals.

Governments and the public are becoming more aware of the passive and active threats against our most precious resource. Security over this vital, life sustaining resource is imperative in light of industrial progress and political activities around the world. The water supplied to America's communities is

potentially vulnerable to terrorist attacks by insertion of biological agents. The possibility of such attacks is now of considerable concern.

Biological agents could be a threat if they were inserted at critical points in a water supply system; theoretically, they could cause a large number of casualties. Chemicals are purposely added to drinking water because it can contain some very offensive life forms. Two of the most common life forms are Giardia and Cryptosporidium.

According to the CDC, during the past two decades, Giardia has become recognized as one of the most prevalent causes of waterborne disease (drinking and recreational) in humans in the United States. The parasite is found in every region of the Country and throughout the world. Cryptosporidium is a protozoan parasite commonly found in the waste of farm animals. Four species are recognized, with Cryptosporidium parvum being the species responsible for causing cryptosporidiosis, a gastrointestinal illness in humans and animals. Cryptosporidium oocysts get into the water supply by surface water run-off - it is estimated by the American Water Works Association (AWWA) that the organism is present in 95% of all surface water in America. The oocysts are impervious to chlorine disinfection and the most effective method of control known to date has been filtration. Symptoms include diarrhea, loose or watery stool, stomach cramps, and upset stomach. In otherwise healthy persons, symptoms may last 2-6 weeks or occasionally longer. Cryptosporidium induces similar symptoms. In persons with average immune systems, symptoms usually last about 2 weeks. Both may be found in soil, food, water, or surfaces that have been contaminated with the feces from infected humans or animals. There are several prescription drugs available to treat Giardia, but they do not totally eliminate the illnesses caused by the parasite. There is no effective treatment for crypto. Most people with a healthy immune system will recover with time.

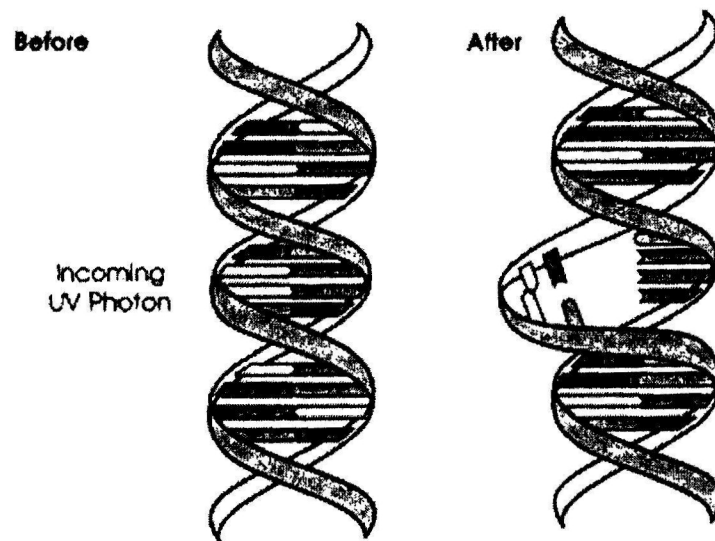
In a press release dated Feb 17, 2006 the American Society for Microbiology, the ASM stated that Anthrax spores could withstand typical water treatment methods with no significant decrease in the number of viable spores. The ASM states, that to achieve a 99.99% kill rate, the water would have to be chlorinated to 10 mg/L, or the equivalent of the chlorination used in a swimming pool, thus making the water undrinkable. SALtech plans on testing its UV technology on Anthrax spores in water, in hopes that the research will indicate the total eradication of the spores.

Technology and Methods:

SALtech presents the most comprehensive fluid security architecture to date. SALtech has been developing solutions for fluid (e.g., water) sterilization using Ultraviolet (UV) lasers narrowly tuned to emanate UV Laser radiation only at its most effective wavelength. Scientists identified the part of the electromagnetic spectrum responsible for this well-known effect; wavelengths between 200nm and 300nm, often called UV-C. The most effective single wavelength is typically UV at 256nm, however recent research has shown that UV at 271nm and UV at 263nm are the most effective UV wavelengths for the sterilization of particular organisms targeted in the scientific community.

Ultraviolet radiation has been in use for over 100 years to treat human disease and neutralize harmful microorganisms. It had not, however, until now been applied to a moving stream of fluid. In the case of water treatment, SALtech will apply a UV laser-borne beam in the killing zone to change the DNA & RNA of undesirable biological contaminants and render them harmless. With SALtech's technology, fluid enters a treatment area near the point of use. The fluid and microorganisms contained therein are subjected to light from a UV laser source. This treatment area uses a serpentine design to expose organisms to a UV laser source, which increases the exposure time, thus providing adequate time to neutralize the microorganisms. As the fluid passes through the treatment area, the microorganisms contained within the fluid are reactive to light of a predetermined wavelength, as photons of UV energy are absorbed by the DNA, the base-pair hydrogen bond is ruptured causing disruption in the DNA chain, which simply means, that when the cell undergoes mitosis the DNA is not able to replicate and unlike chemical disinfectants the organism is unable to develop any immune mechanisms, thereby rendering the microorganisms harmless. With the bacteria, spores, viruses, moulds or protozoa neutralized, fluid is then provided to its point of use, clean and safe for human consumption or medical purposes.

UV Laser radiation photons harm the DNA molecules of living organisms in ways which fuses the DNA and prevents replication. DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) consists of a linear chain of nitrogen bases known as purines (adenine and guanine) and pyrimidines (thymine and cytosine). These compounds are linked along the chain by sugar-phosphate components. The DNA of most forms of life is double-stranded and complimentary; the adenine in one strand is always opposite thymine in the other, and linked by a hydrogen bond, and guanine is always paired with cytosine by a hydrogen bond. The purine and pyrimidine combinations are called base pairs. When UV light of a germicidal wavelength is absorbed by the pyrimidine bases (usually thymine) the hydrogen bond is ruptured. The dimer that is formed links the two bases together, and this disruption in the DNA chain means that when the cell undergoes mitosis the DNA is not able to replicate. The most effective wavelengths to achieve this effect are found between 200nm to 300nm, and the peak wavelength distribution is dependent on the target organism.



Research indicates that shorter wavelength UV Laser radiation has an equally detrimental effect on the outer cell membrane of an organism. This shorter wavelength is more energetic and is absorbed by the organism's outer membrane. The effect is lethal, which means that the cell is unable to effectively regulate osmotic pressure. This effect coupled with the fusing of the DNA means that UV is a simple, elegant disinfectant and one that will increasingly replace the more traditional chemical techniques. The mechanism of kill is well documented and unlike chemical disinfectants the organism is unable to develop any immune mechanisms.

UV technology is now applied to a broad range of fluids, from municipal effluent to ultra pure rinse water; viscous high brine sugar syrups to air. UV is also applied to drinking water to assist in the destruction of pesticides or other contaminants that have entered the aquifer, such as NDMA and MTBE.

UV Laser Sources:

Solid-state, tunable laser sources that can be used for larger sterilization systems, such as the LightAge™ PAL (Pulsed Alexandrite Laser) system or equivalent, have been identified by SALtech. The laser system incorporates a second-harmonic generator (SHG) and a third-harmonic generator (THG) to produce tunable UV laser radiation from approximately 240-270 nm. All output power, stability, and spatial and temporal characteristics will be as specified in the description of the LightAge PAL PRO UV system. The PAL™ laser system is specifically designed for medical and industrial application development and for scientific research. Its amazing versatility has been put to use in hundreds of fields including: dentistry, dermatology, cardiology, lithotripsy, photodynamic therapy, materials processing, nondestructive testing, lithography,

writing of fiber gratings, spectroscopy, photochemistry, holography, LIDAR, and fabrication of carbon nanotubes. PAL™ laser systems have high pulse energies and high average power capabilities, selectable pulse duration and variable pulse formats. They also provide broad spectral coverage with an unprecedented range of spectral bandwidths (from several nanometers down to only a few femtometers).

Semiconductor UV Laser Diodes:

In an attempt to reduce production costs for a mass marketed sterilization system, SALtech's latest UV laser based system is designed around the use of semiconductor UV laser diodes or laser VCSELs. The lasers are placed in a location where they can most effectively disable and render bacteria inactive, nearest the point where water is consumed - hence near the point of use. With the bacteria neutralized, water is then provided clean and safe for human consumption or medical purposes.

Sensing and Notification:

Detection and/or analysis systems can be deployed at multiple stages along a water distribution system, thereby allowing for redundancy and system accuracy. The systems can be networked to a remote monitoring station (e.g., command and control units) through wired and/or wireless networking and communication systems. Networked monitoring and assessment can enable rapid deployment of counter measures within affected water distribution systems and populated communities, to include UV laser treatment and/or emergency shut-off of control valves that can be associated within the present systems.

SALtech's Ambition:

SALtech proposes the use of highly innovative, technologically advanced system architectures for "real-time water security detection and response technology and laser water treatment methods that eradicate undesirable biological contaminants. SALtech plans to develop designs that will be commercially practical, economically feasible, and readily adaptable for various uses as we pursue widespread deployment of what we believe to be a very important, life-sustaining technology for our nations' dwindling water supplies. The total size, however, is dependant on the supply line size, volumetric flow rate of the water, quality of the water flowing in the lines.

This will help conserve water in many municipalities that have problems with their drinking water. By eradicating the undesirable biological contaminants, such as *E. Coli*, *Giardia*, and *Cryptosporidium*, communities will not have to boil water, dump water from storage tanks, or reduce pump capacities to the residents. The technology is both innovative and efficient. Our plan, is to initially build a scaled down unit of the treatment system. This will facilitate testing and verification of the claims and technology that SALtech proposes. Upon this success, SALtech will then produce a working version for testing at a municipal drinking water treatment plant possibly securing the use of the town of Playas, NM (*DHS terrorist response training center*), and its' existing water distribution system, to evaluate and prove SALtech's patented technologies. By having a system comprising of more than one treatment area and associated UV laser sources and biological sensing and notifications system SALtech creates a redundancy that is unprecedented in drinking water treatment and biological contaminant eradication.

SALtech is also working on a low-volume water line unit which can be installed in drinking fountains, portable water units, and under sinks. Laser sources such as a Laser Diode offer the possibility of an alternate power source other than AC. The low voltage diodes could be run off of batteries, solar, or any other means of DC power. In the event of AC power loss; this would enable personnel to have clean, drinkable water that is still being treated.

Potential Markets and Applications:

The following markets are targeted for SALtech products:

- Municipalities, Household uses
- Homeland Security (First responders, FEMA, etc.)

- Government (Embassies, DOE, DOD, etc.)
- Public and commercial buildings, Medical and dental facilities

SALtech's Intellectual Property Portfolio:

Its near point of use laser water treatment systems and methods received a patent on May 25, 2004. A second patent issued on July 19, 2005 for its architecture for biological/chemical sensing, notification and automated intervention (e.g., remote valve shut off). A third general SALtech design that should receive patent protection provides a unique UV laser fluid (water and air) purification system that will address growing concerns associated with "sick building" syndrome and airborne contaminants found in closed air circulation systems found in airliners.

US 6,740,244 – issued May 25, 2004 – NEAR POINT OF USE LASER WATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS AND METHODS.

US 6,919,019 – issued July 19, 2005 – LASER WATER DETECTION, TREATMENT AND NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS AND METHODS.

US 2005/0263444A1– (allowed subject matter) – Published December 1, 2005 – filed as continuation in part on March 2004 - SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR CONTAMINANT DETECTION WITHIN A FLUID, ULTRAVIOLET TREATMENT AND METHODS

SALtech Professionals:

A. Michael Baca, President and Director

Mr. Baca is the President and Director of SALtech Corporation, an IP holding company he helped found in 1996. Mr. Baca has served as the Director of Operations for Calyxes, an R&D company, whose novel Vacuum Freezing Multi-Phase Transformation process separated chemicals (e.g., Arsenic, Xylene, and MTBE) from water. Mr. Baca then served a six year tenure as Vice President of Operations for ThermPlate, a subsidiary of Calyxes, during which time he transformed the company into a fully automated water distillation manufacturing facility. Mr. Baca also lead the design and fabrication of state of the art equipment, such as the Nd-YAG Laser drill, the 5-head automated spot welder and a dual head simultaneous TIG welder and welding fixture, which was utilized exclusively for the thin-film textured ThermPlates. Mr. Baca previously served five years as District Manager for SCP Global Technologies, managing over 50 technicians throughout the United States. Mr. Baca has an extensive track record of proven project management, technical leadership, and expertise in water treatment.

H. Mitchell Rubenstein, Ph.D., Scientific Advisor

Dr. Rubenstein has over 25 years experience in analytical chemistry and microbiology. He has provided the technical leadership needed for certifications and approvals by Chemical Waste Management, the Wisconsin DNR, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Navy NEESA program, and various U.S. EPA programs including Appendix IX (Region V); CERCLA (RAS-Inorganic Chemistry); and SAS (Organic and Inorganic Chemistry). Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Rubenstein has obtained and maintained laboratory accreditations; provided analytical guidance for a 30-state federally funded program; and managed the laboratory providing analytical services in support of a state-led Superfund project. Currently, he is the President/Director of Pinnacle Labs and has maintained a State Contract with the New Mexico Environment Department for over twelve years. A significant portion of this contract is to provide analytical services to the Drinking Water Bureau. Dr. Rubenstein received his degrees from the University of Illinois: Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry and Microbiology, 1978 and his B.A. with Distinction in Chemistry, from Boston University 1973.

Thomas A. Crow, Director of Research

Thomas Crow served as Engineer and Electro-Optical Division Director for Decade Optical Systems, Inc. From 1990 to 2000, As Director, he was responsible for proposal, program and project management, marketing, new business development, management of ISO 9901 registered production, technical publication authorship and conference presentation. Prior to that, Crow was a solid-state laser engineer doing design, research and prototype development work on dozens of types of laser systems and components. Crow has been Managing Director of Asset Management Consultant Service since June, 2000. The firm has been in business for 23 years and currently manages over \$40 million in client assets. Crow holds an MBA from the University of Phoenix and a BSEE, with a concentration in lasers electro-optics, from New Mexico State.

Donald W. Wichers, Director of Operations

Mr. Wichers has served as Director of Operations for SALtech since 2000. He previously worked in a water production plant, supplying water for the semiconductor industry. He was responsible for monitoring and running multi-pass RO water production equipment, maintaining chemistry in the water supply, as well as monitoring and maintaining effluent discharge water. Mr. Wichers was formerly an instructor responsible for nuclear power plant chemistry, steam generator chemistry, and nuclear power plant radiological controls. As a graduate of the United States Navy Nuclear Power program, Mr. Wichers qualified Mechanical Operator at the Navy Nuclear Prototype Training Unit. Mr. Wichers' knowledge of water chemistry, fluid systems, electrical and mechanical systems are unsurpassed.

Luis M. Ortiz, Vice-President and Director

Luis Ortiz has been a practicing patent attorney since 1992. He has served in a variety of professional assignments in federal research institutions, corporate legal departments and private law firms. Luis has been in private law practice as a founding member of Ortiz & Lopez, PLLC since March 2001. In addition, Ortiz has worked with Nortel Networks, Xerox and the U.S. Department of Energy. Luis brings to SALtech experience as a registered patent attorney as well as valuable input and counsel regarding intellectual property and asset exploitation strategies, patent portfolio management, development and licensing. Ortiz received his undergraduate engineering degree from New Mexico State, MBA from University of Phoenix and Juris Doctorate from University of New Mexico.

Stuart H. Ferguson, Secretary/Treasurer and Director

Stuart Ferguson is a licensed CPA and has been controller for Westland Development Company, Inc. since 1993. Prior to Westland, Ferguson over 15 years as Controller, Treasurer, Vice-President or Chief Financial Officer for several New Mexico companies ranging from wholesale and retail to manufacturing and healthcare. Ferguson is experienced in building or modifying systems to improve reporting, control and accountability, including selection and implementation of business software. He has also performed registration and reporting to the Securities and Exchange Commission for several companies over the last twenty years. Ferguson has trained over a dozen controllers and has served as adjunct faculty member at two universities.

**Development Contact: A. Michael Baca, President
(505) 314-1263, mbaca@saltechcorp.com**

**Licensing Contact: Luis M. Ortiz, Vice President
(505) 314-1311, lortiz@olpatentlaw.com**

www.saltechcorp.com



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

AUG 02 2006

OFFICE OF
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Honorable Heather Wilson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wilson:

Thank you for your letter of June 21, 2006, concerning SALtech Corporation's UV laser water sterilization and chemical and biological sensing technology. Administrator Johnson has asked me to respond to you on his behalf.

I appreciate learning about technologies that can be used to protect human health and the environment. As the Agency has assumed a broader role in homeland security, techniques and technologies that protect our nation from acts of terror are also very important. This is particularly true with regard to the nation's drinking water systems and water supplies for which EPA is the infrastructure protection lead.

I asked the staff of our National Homeland Security Research Center (NHSRC) to review the SALtech Corporation's technology. On the basis of information you provided and a visit to SALtech Corporation's Web site, it is clear that their innovative water sterilization and detection systems are still under development and not yet ready for real-world deployment.

I understand that SALtech would like to partner with EPA to continue the development and testing of their technology. While NHSRC staff would be glad to meet with SALtech Corporation to discuss their technology, its attributes in protecting the nation's water infrastructure, and data that has been generated on technology performance, it is unlikely that they would be able to devote the amount of staff time necessary to support such a long-term venture. At the present time, they are only working with commercially available technologies for use by water utilities to monitor and treat drinking water.

As an alternative, SALtech Corporation may want to consider other avenues for funding and collaboration within EPA. The Agency can support the direct funding of technology development through its Small Business Innovative Research Program (SBIR). The SBIR URL is <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/sbir/>. EPA issues annual solicitations for Phase I research proposals from science- and technology-based small businesses with fewer than 500 employees. All proposals are reviewed for scientific and technical merit as well as program relevancy.

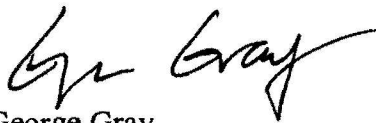
Under Phase I, the scientific merit and technical feasibility of the proposed technology is investigated (proof of concept) by the small business. EPA awards firm-fixed-price Phase I contracts of up to \$70,000, and the period of performance is typically six months. Through this phased approach to SBIR funding, EPA can determine whether the research idea, often involving high-risk advanced concepts, is technically feasible, whether the small business can do high-quality research and development work, and whether sufficient progress has been made to justify a larger \$225,000–\$345,000 Phase II effort.

For the past several years, one of the SBIR Phase I topics of interest has concerned drinking water and wastewater security. SBIR awards are made competitively and only in those technology areas identified in the solicitation. The previous Phase I solicitation is still on the SBIR Web site, and it describes the application requirements and the research topics covered in the program. The next Phase I solicitation will open on March 22, 2007. It will be posted on the SBIR Web site.

There is also a guide on technology commercialization assistance available from the EPA SBIR Web site (<http://es.epa.gov/ncer/sbir/report.pdf>) that might be useful to SALtech Corporation. The company may be able to interest venture capitalists or investment bankers in the technology. It is also conceivable that SALtech Corporation could approach one of the many water treatment or chemical detection instrument manufacturers to see if there is an interest in collaboration. These are the types of companies that would be in the best position to manufacture and market SALtech Corporation's technology.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me or your staff may call Pamela Janifer, in EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, at 202-564-6969.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Gray", with a stylized, cursive script.

George Gray
Assistant Administrator

AC-07-000-3770

HEATHER WILSON
1ST DISTRICT, NEW MEXICO

ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEES:
TELECOMMUNICATIONS
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PERMANENT SELECT
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CHAIR

OVERSIGHT

INTELLIGENCE POLICY

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3101
February 26, 2007

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Heather Wilson
John
Chris
Kurtin

Dear Administrator Johnson,

I am writing to urge you to use Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations provided to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue to fund rural water associations' grassroots technical assistance initiatives currently operating across the country and in New Mexico.

The Joint Funding Resolution, H.J.RES 20 passed the House on January 31, 2007 and was signed by the President on February 15, 2007. As you know, this resolution did not identify any earmarks, including the Rural Water Training and Technical Assistance and Groundwater Protection.

This authorized initiative has been operating for 20 years, providing small communities with limited technical and financial resources to protect their drinking water quality and to comply with federal mandates. The New Mexico Rural Water Association participates in this program.

The EPA should continue to fund this high priority initiative in Fiscal Year 2007 through the Environmental Programs Management account in order to ensure that our small rural communities' access to these critical services is not disrupted.

As you consider funding EPA allocations using the appropriations in the Joint Resolution, I urge you to include funding for rural water initiatives at a level that allows all the local field staff to continue in rural areas and small towns. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Heather Wilson
Heather Wilson
Member of Congress



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAR 30 2007

OFFICE OF
WATER

The Honorable Heather Wilson
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Wilson:

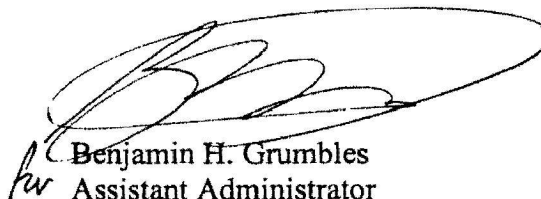
Thank you for your letter of February 26, 2007, to Stephen L. Johnson, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), expressing your support for provision of funding to the National Rural Water Association (NRWA) from discretionary money that may be available to the Agency in the final Fiscal Year 2007 budget. I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of the Administrator. EPA agrees with you that it is critical to provide training and technical assistance to small drinking water systems to ensure that they are able to comply with standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

As you know, the NRWA receives financial assistance through Congressionally-directed funding in EPA's appropriations bills. EPA has included funding in its Fiscal Year 2007 operating plan for a rural water competitive grant program to provide training and technical support for small drinking water systems.

I want to assure you that EPA will also continue to support small systems through our other activities. The Agency supports training and develops targeted tools to help support small system implementation of regulatory requirements. States can also use funding from their Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) grants to support small systems. In addition to the \$14 million expended in FY 2006 for technical assistance to small systems, states also expended an additional \$38 million for other set-aside activities that primarily benefit small systems.

Again, thank you for your letter. If you have further questions, please contact me or your staff may call Steven Kinberg, in EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, at (202) 564-5037.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin H. Grumbles", is written over a large, stylized oval shape. Below the signature, the name "Benjamin H. Grumbles" and the title "Assistant Administrator" are printed.

Benjamin H. Grumbles
Assistant Administrator